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8 May 1961

Director of Training
 THRU : Chief of Station, [REDACTED]
 Chief Instructor, Operations
 Familiarization Course

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Course Report, OFC No. 21

1. Synopsis. Operations Familiarization Course No. 21 ran from 13 March through 21 April 1961. Of the 24 students originally enrolled, 23 completed the course. The 24th student departed two weeks early for an overseas assignment. The average age of the class was 32, and the average grade was GS-9. A detailed breakdown of the student body is attached as Annex A. The great majority of the students came from the DD/P, one from the DD/I, one from the Office of the Director, and five from the DD/S, including four JOT's. This course started simultaneously with the running of OC No. 11, as did OFC No. 20 with the start of OC No. 10. The students of both OFC No. 21 and OC No. 11 worked together as one class during the first three days of their respective courses. During this period, they were given a Clandestine Services orientation.

There were fewer students with little or no Agency experience in OFC No. 21 as compared to OFC No. 20 where the number of new employees reached two-thirds of the total class. The increased composite experience of this group made the problem of orientation and instruction considerably less difficult than with the previous class. The class, as a whole, had enough experience to appreciate what was being presented to them and, in addition, had the background to formulate intelligent comments or questions.

2. Student Performance. OFC No. 21 was the smallest class to date. Three previous classes have had as few as 25 students. This group kept its mind on the problems of the course and on doing, collectively, a good job. The class did not experience deleterious effects of student absences, personal emergencies, illnesses, or withdrawals, which items were at a minimum among these students. OFC No. 21 compares very favorably to previous classes in relation to their level of attainment. From

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the start, the group seemed to be impressed with the importance of learning all they could during the time available to them [REDACTED]. A unique spirit developed within this group, a spirit which seemed to lead toward high performance and extended study periods in the classrooms. In the early weeks of the course, the students seemed to identify themselves with student No. 206 who was singularly dedicated, interested, and competent. Taken as a whole, the students of OFC No. 21 performed at a high level. Their performance is considered to have been close to the top of their abilities. There has not been in any recent OFC so much concentrated student effort put upon the preparation of reading assignments and written exercises in the classrooms at night. During OFC No. 21 for the first time, OFC students were permitted to work in the classrooms past midnight. Their preparation of written assignments was, on the whole, quite satisfactory. A factor in this was their intense interest in doing a competent piece of work.

All of the students performed satisfactorily or above, and some showed a high degree of aptitude for advanced work in the area of operations.

The written evaluations of OFC No. 21 did not rate the students on an adjectival basis. Narrative paragraphs were used for the purpose of identifying, to both the supervisor and the student, those areas in which the OFC staff observed them to have a particular aptitude or a need for additional training.

3. Student Comment. The student critiques were, in most cases, indicative of general class preferences and dislikes as mirrored by the individual students. The students did not feel the necessity for writing critiques, and those 20 who submitted critiques did so more as a matter of completing another assignment. There is a noticeable improvement in the student respect

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for instructor capability shown throughout the OFC No. 21 critiques. There is a consistent request throughout the critiques for additional instruction in all phases of covert action. Several students felt the need for more information on the Russian Intelligence Service, defectors, and TSD. Several students suggested a unified course problem involving one project in which the student would be introduced to all of the facets of operational and support experience that are now dealt with in the multi-project [REDACTED] situation. This suggestion, which was made by several of the better students, has real merit in that in the short space of time available to the students they could handle one project encompassing the many aspects of field station experience without the burdensome necessity of mastering great amounts of paper on numerous individual agents and projects.

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4. Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Runnings. The OC staff is satisfied that OFC No. 21 met its objectives more completely than the previous running because of numerous changes that were made in the course content as a result of increased experience on the part of the staff and attention to student critiques. The major elements of change in OFC No. 21 were the introduction of some eighteen hours of Clandestine Services orientation which resulted in the dropping from the schedule of eighteen hours of scheduled study time. The majority of the clandestine field activities lectures were reduced from three or two hours to one hour, saving six hours of lecture time. This change was partly in consideration of the over-all proportion of time granted to the various training components and, also, in deference to the student critiques. The course critiques of OFC No. 20 indicated a reasonable request on the part of the students for additional practical exercises in which they could apply the techniques offered through lectures and seminars. This was met during the course by the addition of a day-long practical exercise on the [REDACTED]

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This was enthusiastically received by the group and is considered to be a sound conclusion to the debriefing and interrogation phase of the instruction. A lecture was introduced in this class on the Russian Intelligence Service to satisfy a shortcoming that had been noticed by previous students. This subject was eagerly attended and brought requests for a fuller coverage of this important area.

The staff will continue to make such additions to or improvements of the OFC as it deems necessary and advisable and, in doing this, will take into cognizance the students' critiques, however, not feeling bound by these passing comments.

The staff has been pleased to learn since the writing of the Course Report on OFC No. 20 that OFC No. 21 is not to be the final running of the Operations Familiarization Course but that, instead, it will continue with OFC No. 22, beginning 11 September 1961.

In closing, special note should be taken of the excellent job turned in by the staff in making this, perhaps, the finest running of an OFC to date. It is a yeoman's task to run an OFC concurrently with the first six weeks of an OC - and their performance is even more exceptional when it is realized that the staff was far under strength.

Chief Instructor

Attachment:
Annex A

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